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MORE DETAILS OF AMUNDSEN'S ARCTIC WORK.

The paper which Captain Roald Amundsen read before the Royal Geographical Society on Feb. 11, 1907 (*Geog. Jour.*, May, 1907), contains interesting details of his work in the neighbourhood of the North Magnetic Pole. He decided to make his base station, where the instruments for magnetic variation were to be erected, at such a distance from the pole that the inclination would be about 89° . This requirement was fulfilled by Gjöahavn on the southeast side of King William Land, and this became his headquarters. He made many excursions to adjacent parts of the country and to Boothia Felix, where he succeeded, by the help of the declination of the compass, in absolutely proving, what of late has been assumed on theoretical grounds, that the magnetic pole has not an immovable and stationary situation, but in all probability is in continual movement. In what manner this movement takes place the considerable amount of material acquired by observation will, he says, when it has been worked out, give instructive information.

The magnetic observations were kept going day and night without interruption for 19 months. Prof. Mohn had equipped the expedition with a complete set of meteorological instruments, and observations in this branch of science were also taken the whole of the time.

Captain Creak, the British authority on terrestrial magnetism, in discussing Amundsen's paper said:

From what Capt. Amundsen has described, I gather that he had a most splendid set of magnetic instruments. There were differential instruments which were going for 19 months, which tell us for every moment of the day what the direction of the needle was and the changes in the force directing it. Probably the declination of the needle was changing 10° either way— 10° to the left and 10° to the right of magnetic north, and at about 7 o'clock in the morning and at 1 or 2 o'clock in the afternoon respectively. Still more important were the excursions he made, so that he could give a most valuable account of all the magnetic conditions surrounding him. He certainly, so far as I can see, found out where the pole was for one epoch, but there is still some doubt as to whether it is a fixed point or not. That remains to be proved. It will require years to get the observations into form, but I think we have every hope that eventually we shall be able to find out what magneticians have been wishing for, for many years. We shall have found out where the magnetic pole is, and also what is going on there.

Admiral Field, also commenting on the magnetic work, said he was sure that when the observations were thoroughly worked out they would be of the greatest service in improving our magnetic charts.

The most important geographical work, aside from the making of the Northwest Passage, was the sledge journey of Lieut. Hansen and Sergeant Ristvedt to chart the east coast of Victoria Land,

which had never been surveyed. They had two sledges, twelve dogs, and equipment for seventy days. They started on April 2, 1905. The depot which had been made a year before had been entirely spoiled by bears, but Lieut. Hansen and his companion shot bears, seals, and reindeer and thus spun the journey out for eighty-four days. Excellent work was done. The east coast of Victoria Land was charted up to the 72nd parallel. The land formerly seen by Dr. Rae at the south end of Victoria Strait proved to be a group of over 100 small, low islands. They were charted on the way back. An interesting event of this journey was the meeting with another unknown Eskimo tribe, the "Kiilnermium Eskimo," whose hunting fields extend from the Coppermine River eastwards. These Eskimo, like the others mentioned by Amundsen, have no connection with civilization.

GEOGRAPHICAL RECORD.

AFRICA.

HANS VISCHER'S JOURNEY ACROSS THE SAHARA.—This gentleman, formerly a missionary in northern Nigeria, has added another to the remarkable trips across the Sahara that have been made within the past two years. His route was from Tripoli to Lake Chad. He left Tripoli in July last year accompanied by a number of Mecca pilgrims from northern Nigeria. He brought ten of them with their families safely through the desert. In the mountains of Gharian he found people living in subterranean dwellings. He obtained considerable information regarding the Senussi. He says that this great sect is constantly losing ground owing to the fact that the late Mahdi died without accomplishing anything. The Senussists always teach the people to believe that it is they who will restore Islam to its old position. He found many Senussi clubs in parts of the desert along his route. Each club is a centre of religious observances and makes an annual contribution of dates, camels, etc., to headquarters. The Senussists tolerate but do not support the Turkish Government. Mr. Vischer expresses the opinion that the danger from the Senussi movement lies chiefly in the fact that there is at present no leader strong enough to control the various factions.

MR. AUGUSTE CHEVALIER IN THE IVORY COAST COLONY.—This well-known French explorer is now engaged in the study of the agricultural and forest productions of the French colony. *La Géographie* (No. 3, 1907) says that the new railroad enabled him easily to penetrate the depths of the great virgin forest of that region. The facility and safety with which he can move about and pursue his studies contrasts brightly with the difficulties which Binger, Hostains, and other explorers met there years ago. They had to overcome many obstacles, chiefly the hostility of the natives, and their attention was so distracted from scientific work that their reports on the flora, fauna, and ethnography of the country were necessarily very imperfect.